

IN THE CLAIMS

Before claim 1, insert -- What is claimed is: --

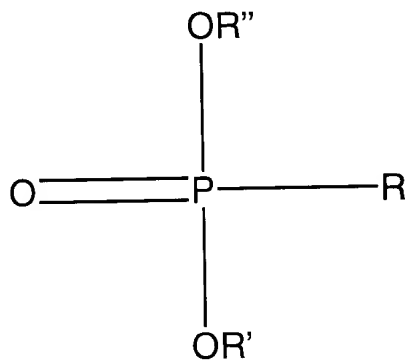
Please cancel claims 1-8.

Please amend the following claims:

In claim 15, before "of preventing accretion", delete "Method" and insert -- A method--.

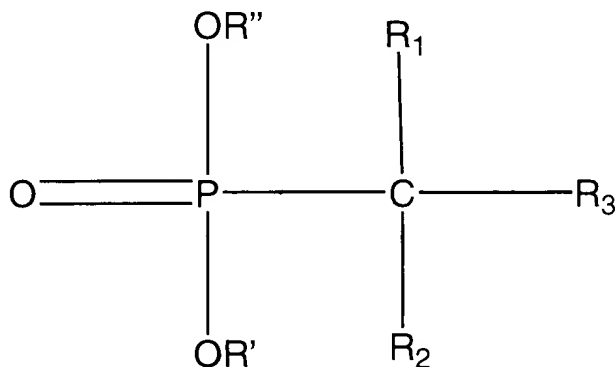
Please add the following claims:

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Claim 17. A drilling fluid being water-based and having an inhibitive component to reduce the hydration of shale further comprising an additive in accordance with the formula



where R, R' and R'' are groups of non-polymeric character.

Claim 18. The drilling fluid of claim 17, comprising an additive in accordance with the formula



where R₁, R₂ and R₃ are groups of non-polymeric character.

Claim 19. The drilling fluid of claim 17, wherein the additive is based on a phosphor derivative of the succinic acid.

Claim 20. The drilling fluid of claim 17, wherein the additive is based on a short chain phosphorylated hydrocarbon.

Claim 21. The drilling fluid of claim 17, comprising the additive in a concentration of up to about 10% weight by volume.

Claim 22. The drilling fluid of claim 17, being a reactive anionic drilling fluid.

Claim 23. The drilling fluid of claim 17, being a phosphate-based drilling fluid.

Claim 24. The drilling fluid of claim 21, being a silicate-based drilling fluid.